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Advertisements

Thank you to our editors: Russ Beausoleil, Lily Denver,

Niko DeSousa, Brynn Levy, Tomaso Scotti, Sai

Sriya Vankamamidi







Hey Reader!

Thanks for picking up a copy of our zine :)

My name is Russ, and I have had the joy of presiding over the UConn Free Press for the 2023-24 school year. We are a small but mighty club, and I am so proud of everyone's hard work to get The UConn Free Press Relationship Edition published and in your possession. It has been unexpectedly difficult to get this edition out there, but the Free Press is persistent and resilient.

During covid, our club took a hiatus while it was difficult to get people engaged in extracurriculars. Last year, our noble leader Mik Man brought the Free Press back to continue on its 54 year legacy. I am forever grateful to them for putting in the hard work and digging their heels in to make it happen. When I joined the Free Press in fall of 2022, I was having a challenging time. I commuted to campus from 30 minutes away, my partner of six months was studying abroad in London, and I felt a bit isolated and disconnected from campus. Mik and the rest of the lovely Free Pressians opened their arms to me and gave me a space to feel loved and included. The Free Press is a community of loving people who will always hold space for those who need it. We are a united front, seemingly always being pitted against USG to fight for the funding that we are entitled to (which is why this zine is published electronically).

That is why this zine is so special to me. I am a very small piece of an amazing community that brought this zine into existence. The last page lists all of the people with direct contribution to this edition, but there are so many more that voiced their opinions to design and create this publication. It was important for us that this process be a collaboration, especially given the theme of relationships. So I will wrap up by saying thank you. Thank you reader for giving us a reason to publish, and thank you to all my friends who have had a part in making this happen. Hopefully, we will be able to secure the funding in the fall for this to be printed for you to take home.

Now go on and enjoy all of the amazing art that so many have made for your enjoyment.

Lots of Love,
Russ :)



you

You'll never know that
I actually enjoy

you

more than others





I FOUGHT
FOR US
BUT WHY
DIDN'T YOU





to perform

...movement which at first might be considered
designed toward fusion, the position of the body
does not change, but for the introduction of the
that period. The nature here is that the two have the
human aspect, and is not the forced among the two
is, the underlying factor which shaped, and is essential
...a word with a deep meaning, and

non-human person. It is
of this person, to be
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The male is
...of this person, to be

frenzied

for nearly 13 hours.

of the observed bat pairings, this lasted for less than 53 minutes, but one duo persisted
Then, the male
peris head against the female's vulva. For half

excess of devotion

Each tries to bite

to perform

to perform

to perform

to perform

My feelings for you are all wrong and positioned as

Linnaeus' diagram for the amphibia

But they lie in opposite, really,

Rather than his 1755 description of elegant

I'd write:

"This most terrific and beguiling

Animal is distinguished by their

Makelovian and even machining heart,

Rabid lungs, and well, we need not get too

Descriptive of other things."

Complex and fluid is our sexuality

As the four genders of the white-throated sparrow

We have found each other

Despite that 1/4 odds for reproductive reciprocity

Or are we deeper than an intraspecific
relationship?

Is this an obligate mutualism?

Like the fungus and the alga

I've lichen you a lot

Even if you're just the alga

Ancestor to Chlorophyta

I'd never consider you "basal"

Sometimes when we're together I think about in

Pollination

If we were kept in a research collection,

I'd want us to be preserved like INV-44409

Never to pollinate again,

But forever caught in a state of passion

Would you tear my head off right after?

As the Mantis

(And some Anaschids) Do?

I wouldn't hold it against you

Is that the loss of hydrostatic pressure

Caving my knees to fold?

I'm getting butterflies in my digestive diverticula

But I guess these are terrestrially biased

What if we were in the ocean?

Would we be marine or pelagic?

If we were marine Alligatorids I would believe

And put on a water droplet shore for you

In the pelagic bubble zone

Where freshwater are scarce

I would find a whole lot for us

Or I'd enter in part of you,

As angiosperms do

Could we get much closer than that?

What if we were both mossantherids?

Living within the same coral

Or what if we were both endosymbionts

Within the same alga

I guess it doesn't really matter what I am

As long as I feel

Would have had

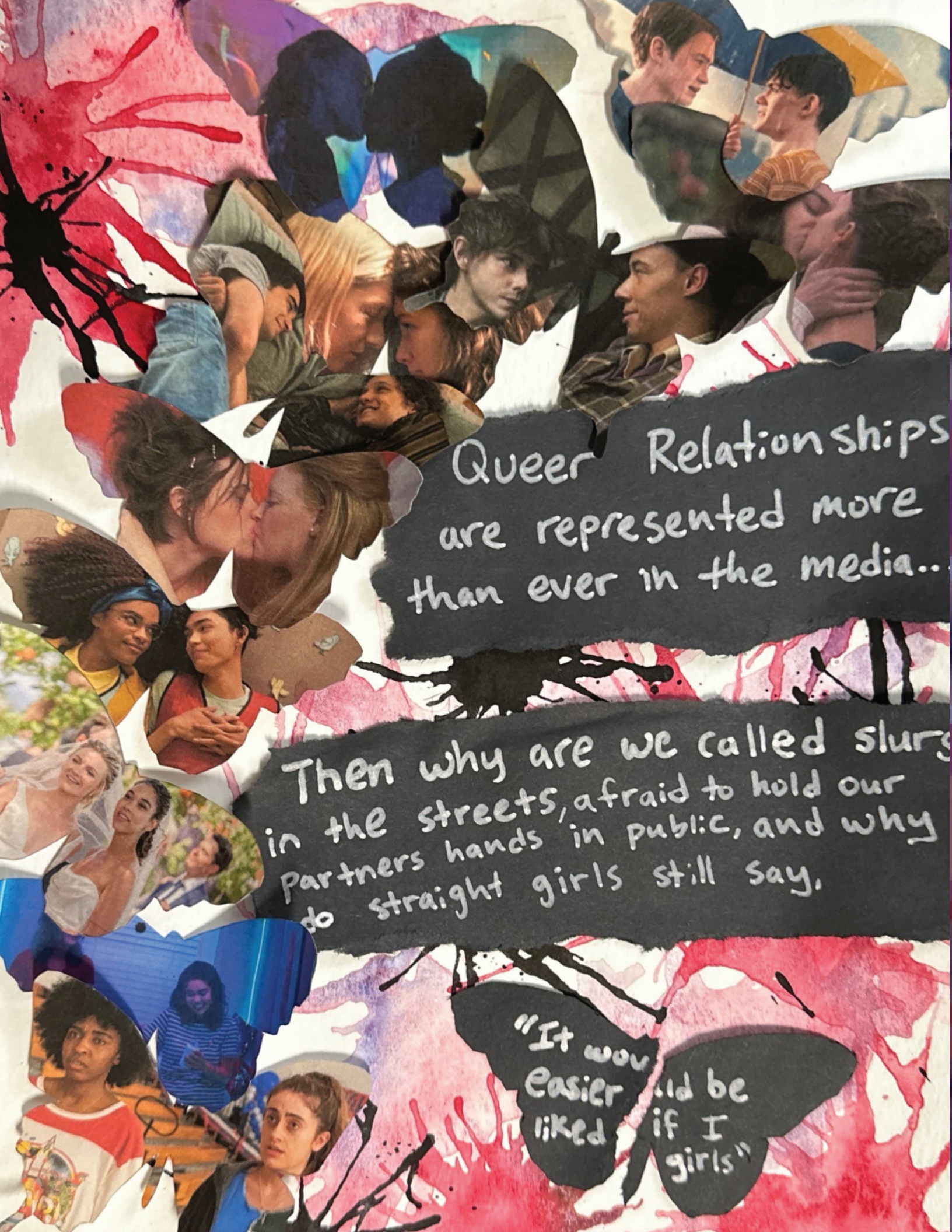
The choice

To meet

You

-A love poem from one biologist to another


Disseminating collage produced
using illustrations and photographs
obtained from Wikipedia, Flickr, and other
free image sites to their respective authors.
They were arranged from illustrations by
Vivian Jacobson, a biology student.
While creating gallery and layout
Thomas E. Brown. Thank you all.



Queer Relationships
are represented more
than ever in the media..

Then why are we called slurs
in the streets, afraid to hold our
partners hands in public, and why
do straight girls still say,

"It would be
easier if I
liked girls"

The background of the entire image is a dense, repeating pattern of human eyes. The eyes vary in color, including shades of brown, blue, and grey. Overlaid on this background are several pairs of eyes that are highlighted by colored, mask-like outlines. These outlines are in shades of purple, pink, orange, and red. The highlighted eyes are positioned at various angles, some looking directly forward, others slightly to the side. In the center of the image, there is a white rectangular box with horizontal blue lines, resembling a piece of lined paper. Inside this box, there is handwritten text in a cursive script.

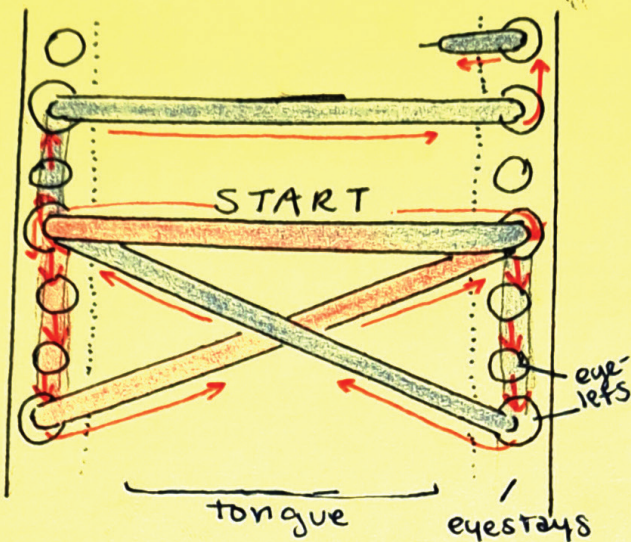
It's like I spent my whole life living between eyes,
just because one day mine would meet yours -
and I would just know. And when do I just know.





STAR CROSSED LACES

STARTING & LEFT LACE



1. After starting, go 3 eyelets down (under eyestays) & criss cross. After this, leave the red lace alone.
2. Pull blue lace 2 eyelets up (under eyestays). Pull across & then up 1 eyelet.



Pencil outlines = under the eyestays

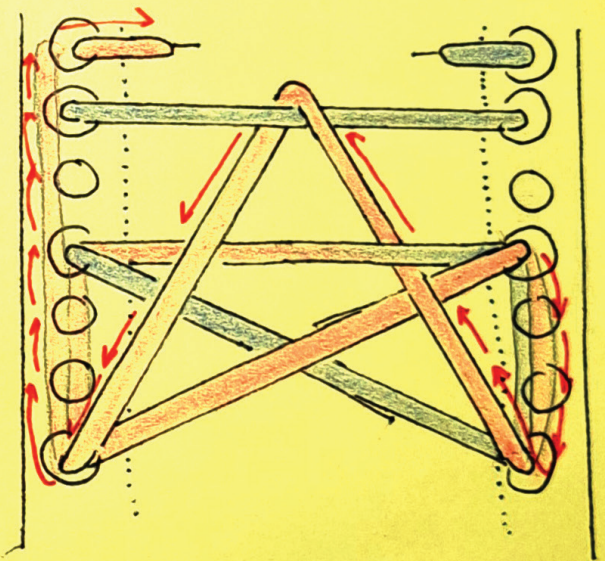
(If you have 8 eyelets, you can leave 1 row blank on the top or bottom)

3. Back to red lace. Pull it down 3 eyelets (under eyestays).

- Pull it under start line, the over the blue line
- Then go under blue line & over start line to 3 down from start

4. Pull up to top eyelet across from blue lace

ENDING & RIGHT LACE

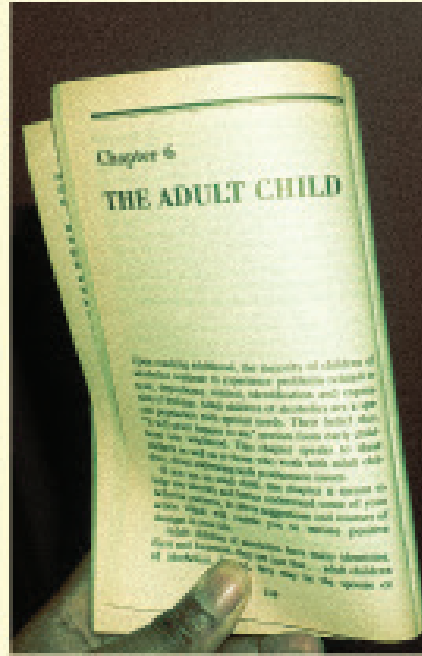


My besties and I laced our shoes like this together one lazy Saturday afternoon. Now whenever I look down I am reminded of them ♡

3 Ways to Get Over It.



cut your hair.



read self-help books.



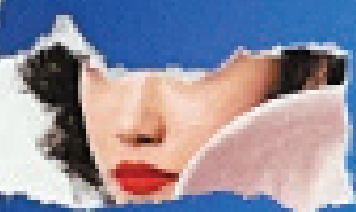
reach for the dark.

Does getting over it really work? Does the pain ever really go away or does it settle in you until someone else picks it up? Can you ever be what you once were before that pain began or do you look through life longing for something to fill that void? Is it something that can be fed or will it never be satisfied? Are you aware that you lost something?



FULL CIRCLE

ing from Dumbarton
Clark's Misbehavior
Wednesday fingers
years' LaneFord,
singly romantic
for bloques
1930-4000
een.com
to shoes



And there she

is



walk ing

on

air



As she looked around, she
saw every woman she's ever
known, a hundred yards away
and slowly disappearing from
her view, wafting away into
the sea.

She wanted to scream, either at
the women who abandoned
this Themyscira or just into the
air around. She could see herself
standing on the edge of the water,
watching the women around her
slowly leave on life rafts and yachts
alike.

She felt her feet sink into the sand
below, wet and grainy against her
ankles as she quickened her step,
and it only made her heart beat faster.
She saw them leave in droves, waving
goodbye and letting the current take them
out to sea, drifting away with the motion of
the waves. With her skirt in her hands, her
toes hit the water, the wet giving way to the
soft bed of sand as she waded in further,
calling out to them as they left her. She cried
out, begging them to come back to her, to
where the land was solid and dry and where
everything they ever knew resided, but they
wouldn't listen.

Their hands dangled over the edge of their
rafts, skimming the water, unafraid of what
lay below. She slowed down, letting her
breath overtake her cries, and as she quieted
she realized she was up to her thighs, water
slapping against her hips with every crest
that passed her, and suddenly she
understood where they were going.
Suddenly, the distance between her and the
women in her life seemed to shrink, their
lives overlapping until they seemed to
become one, and it scared her.

She would go out there, too,
someday, she thought, and
her heart seized in fear of the
ocean, of crossing to some
unknown land with no one she's
ever known. Perhaps she would
swim, or be tethered to a raft, or
on a boat captained by another,
but she knew that she would have
to cross that ocean someday, would
someday have to leave the ground
she had known her whole life.


Morning Routine

You never questioned the blanketed mirror
Only unveiled to eyeshadow, mascara, then
Recover.
Do you see these red-rims? -reeling nightmares on repeat
I shake
Child-proofed orange bottles.
Palms of sweat cup pills
Patterned white, blue, white, my morning magic milligrams
Too big to try dry swallowing, I heave
and you:

You don't need that Big Pharma shit!
Have you tried drinking ((Yeah))
more water? No.
Have you tried eating ((Yeah))
healthier? No.
What about cutting ((Yeah))
down screen time? No.

I choke harder on self-explanations
You'll blame yourself
For my state of being
Burdens us both
You'll say I must be a terrible mother





We're at your friends apartment and no one is talking to me. Its that weird place between sober and drunk where i cant stop thinking about pissing myself on this couch, and i feel so stupid in this outfit my roommate picked out for me, but at least the music is good. Car seat headrest or something. I only kind of know the words.

I haven't smoked in a year but when you offer me the blunt i don't say no. i remember being a senior in high school and taking edibles before work - i was a cashier at a pizza place, 4pm to 9pm monday friday saturday. I'd drive to work, high as anything, then smoke cigarettes out back with the 59-year-old man that made the pizzas. He was always drunk and had an accent so thick it sounded like he was talking underwater. Most of our conversations were him slurring out stories about his ex wife while i just smiled and nodded and pretended like i had any idea what he was saying. One of my bosses was bipolar, unmedicated, and would make me cry every once in a while.

At the end of the night, after fucking up half the orders i took and under or over charging people at random, i would drink the cheap chardonnay we sold and count my tips as the aging waitresses rolled silverware. They would complain about their daughters and bug me about getting a boyfriend - by that point, i was cheerfully tipsy and would just shrug, smile, mumble something about being too busy. I'd wobble back to my car and drive home like that, muscle memory doing most of the work. Get home, red eyed and nauseous, feed the cats, chew some gum before kissing my mom goodnight. Get high again in the morning. And so it went.

I take a drag and immediately double over, lungs spasming, but you don't say anything. Just look anywhere but at me.

Once a week, the man that made the pizzas would bring in a single orange. Between sprinkling cigarette ash all over the dough, he would cut the orange into 6ths and chew each slice slowly, wiping his sticky fingers on his apron. He would always save one slice for me, sliding it into my hands with a cough and wink.

Your hand comes up to rest on the nape of my neck, soft, thumb rubbing circles into my back. More people in the apartment, more smoke, new song. Familiar, but i only kind of know the words.



ERIN ONLY TEXTS ME WHEN SHE WANTS A CIGARETTE. A "YOU UP?" MESSAGE AROUND MIDNIGHT, AND I ALWAYS AM. NO PRETENSE. SHE'S RELIABLE LIKE THAT - I'M NEVER WORRIED ABOUT GETTING THE WRONG IDEA.



I DON'T THINK SHE LIKES ME ALL THAT MUCH, REALLY. IT'S BEEN THAT WAY SINCE HIGH SCHOOL, FRIENDS OF CONVENIENCE. WE SAT NEXT TO EACH OTHER DURING LUNCHTIME EVERY DAY FOR TWO YEARS, BUT I CAN COUNT ON ONE HAND THE NUMBER OF ACTUAL CONVERSATIONS WE HAD. IT WOULD GO LIKE THIS: HER, SLUMPED OVER A TEXTBOOK AND DUTIFULLY IGNORING EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE; ME, SULKING AND LISTENING TO TEEN SUICIDE OR WHATEVER LOFI INDIE GARAGE ROCK TRASH I HAPPENED TO BE OBSESSING OVER AT THE MOMENT.



THE CLOSEST WE GOT TO ACTUALLY HANGING OUT WAS IN OUR SENIOR YEAR, THE ONE TIME SHE DROVE ME HOME FROM SCHOOL. SHE POINTED TO A CORNER A BLOCK AWAY FROM MY HOUSE AND TOLD ME SHE HAD FUCKED SOMEONE IN HER CAR AT THAT EXACT SPOT THE WEEK BEFORE. EVEN NOW, I CAN'T GO PAST THAT CORNER WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT HER.



I WAIT FOR HER OUTSIDE MY BUILDING. I DON'T INVITE HER IN, AND SHE DOESN'T ASK.

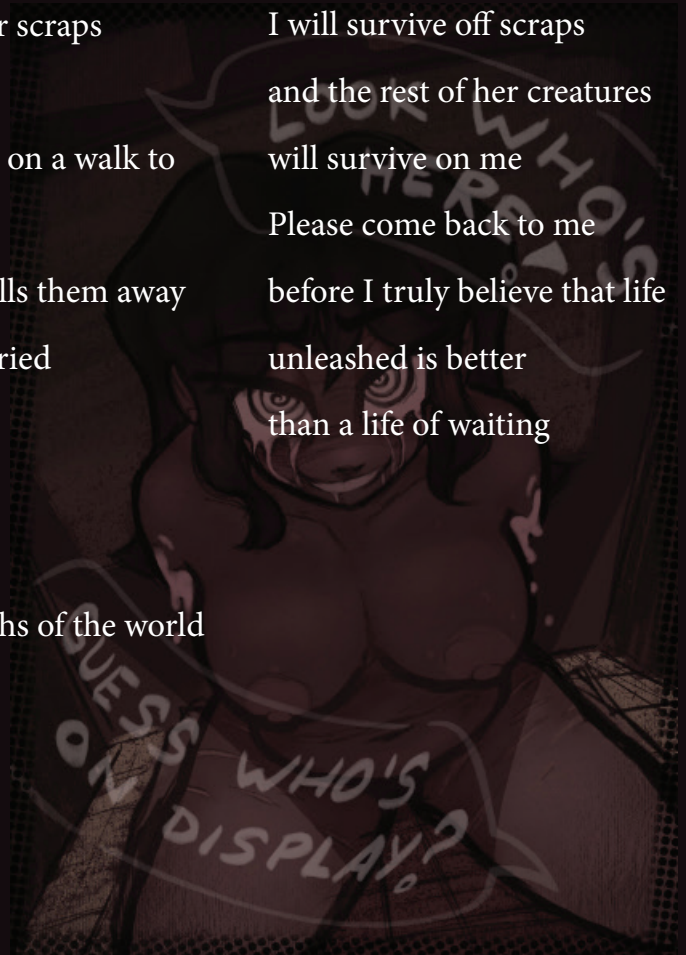


DOMESTICATED

I sit
I stay
I wait for you to come home
I stare at the door and beg for it
to open
I gaze at an empty food bowl
A water bowl gently coated with
dirt
I drink it
I lick at the crumbs
Because that is what you have
given me
I know at heart I should run
Hunt
I look as rabbits pass and
imagine their flesh between my
teeth
The feeling of running without
a leash pulling at my neck
Freedom feels so good
until I feel the night
The breeze soars through me
My coat
delicately groomed to keep me
comfortable
leaves me out to freeze
Ripped, raw paws dig through

The ground hard and cold
grabs me
pulls me closer
My eyes cannot stay open
I need to keep looking
I am not a big dog
I now know fear
Never taught to me before
for when I was wrong with you,
all I would get was nothing
now I will feel it all
thrown to cold ground
ripped to shreds
Bones picked for scraps
Left there
maybe for a dog on a walk to
chew
but someone pulls them away
for they are worried
disease
death
they protect
from all the truths of the world

So as I sit there
and pray you return to me
I can't help but gaze outside
wishing that you were here
just enough
in a perfect sweet spot
to stop me from running
right into the arms of nature
for if I do
I will never be yours again
I will belong to the earth
And as the planet spins and
maybe you look
I will survive off scraps
and the rest of her creatures
will survive on me
Please come back to me
before I truly believe that life
unleashed is better
than a life of waiting













An abstract painting featuring a hand in shades of pink and red, holding a vibrant red rose. The background is a deep, textured blue. The overall mood is romantic and evocative, serving as a backdrop for the poem.

Today, I am trying for myself

I am grabbing onto life and saying MINE MINE MINE

No ghost of the past will pry this present from my grasp

I am grabbing onto

Every drop of sunshine that spills from the window
To the crunch of pebbles peppered beneath my boots
And the freshness of morning cold in the back of my throat

I am grabbing onto

Every note of laughter in the banter we share and
Stolen seconds in the doorway instead of simple goodbyes

I am grabbing onto

Meteors showering in midnight's suspense
To the moon up past its bedtime in the cerulean sky
Onto peach red-ripe sunsets doubled in the mirror of the lake

I am grabbing onto

The beat of the shower and the richness of my lotion
To the reflection of me (who I don't hate) in the mirror

I am grabbing onto the sheets of my bed

And I do not imagine you in the space I don't fill

I am grabbing onto tomorrow

To the promise of better days



I walk by your flowers in the late

afternoon and they are jumping out of their skin to see the sun

Your smile

Like the sun

is the brightest part of my days

The flowers

They jump out of their skin to see the sun

Everyday with anticipation

Until they are greeted by their brightest part of their day

And then I smile

Every time with the thought of you as I pass your flowers

In the late afternoon

Chicken

My ear is so far stretched,
tucked under my chin
I look like a chicken.
I am a chicken,
when the phone doesn't leave the table,
when the numbers aren't pressed in.
I would call,
But uneasiness spreads
as I press his numbers,
ringing drones until he answers and
A bah-kawk is all I'll muster
and so he will hang up.
This wattle weighs down my words,
makes them inescapable from this chicken neck.
Next time I will thrash about
my wings, lose a couple of feathers
for dramatic effect, ferociously
cluck, and throw in a cock-a-doodle-doo
which translates to:
you make me feel like a chicken.
My feather fingers can't dial
and bravery doesn't work
for people like me,
people who turn into chickens.
He's a predator, an insatiable wolf
that gobbles the naïve.
I am a no different chicken, we all
cry wolf and cry wolf and cry wolf.
I know he wouldn't treat me any differently.
He'd yank out my feathers,
snap my beak and
with his savage teeth he'd leave my body
massacred, punctured, dead.



Gynecomastia. Male Breast Reduction.

Gynecomastia refers to a condition where the male breast becomes enlarged. As many as one of three males are affected by this embarrassing problem. Gynecomastia develops from a variety of causes, but most often it is just an increase of fatty or glandular tissue due to a subtle imbalance of hormonal metabolism.

If this condition is a source of embarrassment for you, surgical correction is usually the treatment. Whether you have an accumulation of fatty tissue only, or if it's combined with glandular tissue, cosmetic surgery can give you excellent results. Many times restoring your confidence to participate in summer sports and activities.

If you have been considering cosmetic surgery, and would like more information, call me at (212) 832-0770 to schedule an appointment for a complimentary consultation.



For an excellent man with an accumulation of fatty tissue in the fatty tissue only lip area, needed, suction is inserted through a small incision through the fat layer on the side of the chest, suction is applied and the fat is removed.



A different procedure is used when glandular tissue causes the overdeveloped contour. The unnecessary tissue is removed in sections through a small one-inch incision around the nipple-areolar complex.



The results are excellent. The undesirable contour is removed, restoring the normal male breast shape.



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I delude myself into believing in love.
A frivolous thing,

Of red lab-grown roses and pink confectionary hearts.

I don't know how it happens, or why,
But somehow I manufacture a pounding heart and flushed face
An all-consuming obsession with kisses and bodies entwined.

I convince myself to abandon all reason
To chase after whichever person my brain has affixed upon as an easy target.

I trip over myself, head over heels, making a fool of myself

Making every attempt to grow closer to the target
Aiming with a shoddy Cupid's arrow
Attempting to win any scrap of affection.

I scramble in the trail of rose petals coughed up from my own throat,
A dog that has been fed a bleeding heart and licks at the droplets falling from a circumstance's fingertips.
I crawl on gnarled hands and scarred knees.

Begging for a glimpse of affection,
For just one small happenstance
To turn over and over in my mouth,
To chew into a perfect little marble of lunacy.

These marbles, small and pebblish and contorted,
Hang in a gallery within the endless halls of neurons devoted to the target.
Hang from the ceiling by tangled heartstrings, a spider's web of obsession.

But lo, the love is returned!
I am presented a bouquet of scentless blood roses, a charming twist of the mouth that by all prior logic I
should covet. I don't.

The roses within me wilt, curling and drying and wisping away.

The arrow disintegrates as it hits its mark
The blood trail grows rancid for no reason at all
And I snap yellow-toothed at the hand that feeds me.

This is not always the way it ends.

Sometimes, it ends uncleanly, amputated with a butterfly knife rather than a bone saw.

A gentle end, padded with promise of a friendship or a claim of love untarred by sugar.
The roses fade, but they do not wilt.

Mayhaps they dry handsomely, a delicate yet fragile bouquet placed gently on a shelf.

I am not obsessed, but if I am to be awarded with some softness,
I will take the pebble
I will carry it gently between my teeth
And find it precious for what it is rather than what it could be.

That is the love that I want, I think.

This is what I want to hold within the walls of my heart
Between my teeth and caged in crooked fingers

This is what I want to keep.

I want our matter to metamorphosize into the same dusk star.

A Love Letter (to Fred Armisen?)

By: Eleanor Gelb

Her name is Nora.

If Fred Armisen and Natasha Lyonne stayed together and ever had a child, she would be that baby.

With the biggest brown eyes you've ever seen, she looks like a drawing straight out of the film Big Eyes.

Yet, she has started wearing colored contacts recently, so they are sometimes the biggest hazel eyes.

We were on FaceTime for a little over an hour today.

A few minutes of the call were spent dying laughing because she mispronounced the word "hamburger" while reading a menu.

When we were in middle school, we watched the Sandy Passage episode of Documentary Now.

We soon became confident in our identities as Big Vivvy and Little Vivvy, or Fred and Bill.

We always break into song, whether that be in person or over FaceTime.

Our go-to's are "Rolling in the Deep" by Adele or "Pitter Patter", a classic from Sandy Passage.

Yesterday, I felt compelled to reference an SNL skit while having a conversation with people I had just met. I decided against it.

I made sure to text Nora, so at least someone could hear my joke.

Nora is the only person who laughs with me at the New Girlfriend SNL skit.

In the skit, Fred Armisen plays Jason Sudeikis' new girlfriend named

Regine, complete with a black mini skirt and French bob. I would advise everyone to watch it.

Nora is the kiss to my neck

the air to my ear

and the ballet flat to my guacamole

Nora is my best friend of eleven years, so I wrote this love letter for her

and also Fred Armisen.



REGULAR FLAVOR

FUN!



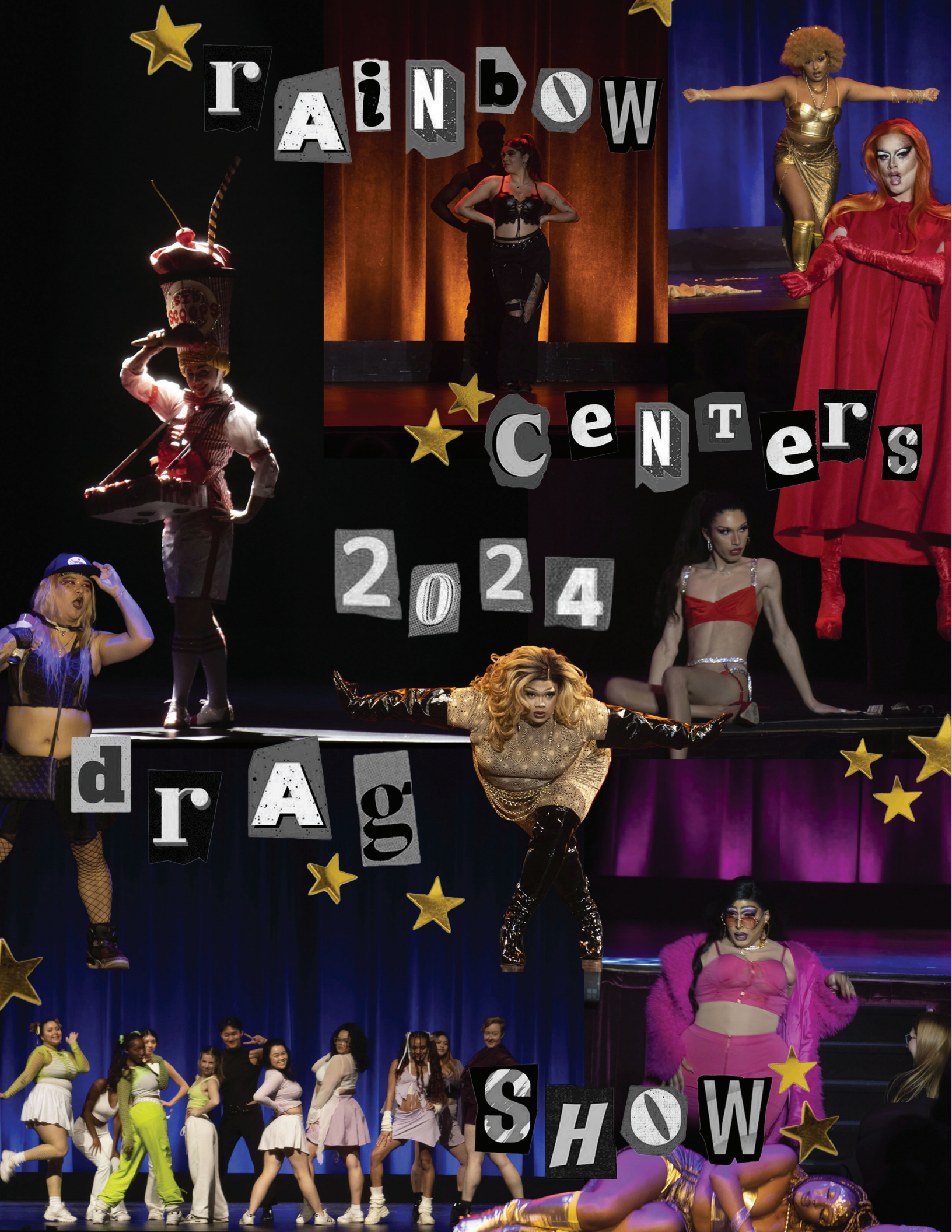
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SHOW



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